



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION
1000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

Subj: ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY

Federal Acquisition Circular (FAC) 97-27 implements Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by Subsection 408(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. It is effective June 25, 2001. Section 508 requires Federal agencies or departments that develop, procure, maintain or use Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) to ensure the EIT allows Federal employees with disabilities access to and use of information that is comparable to that provided to employees without disabilities. Section 508 also requires comparable access for members of the public with disabilities who seek information or services from Federal agencies and departments.

FAC 97-27 defines EIT very broadly; in addition to information technology, EIT includes such things as telephones, copiers, fax machines, and worldwide web sites. The FAC incorporates the standards published by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board) that provide technical and functional performance criteria necessary for accessibility. Purchase of EIT that fails to comply with these standards could result in a complaint or a civil suit being filed against the agency.

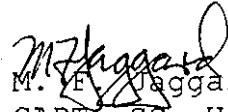
With limited exceptions, Section 508 compliance requirements apply to contracts and task or delivery orders awarded or placed on or after June 25, 2001.

The final rule issuing FAC 97-27 and the Access Board's accessibility standards are at <http://www.section508.gov>. This web site is the central Federal Government site for information on Section 508.

Please disseminate this information throughout your organization to ensure that those who make purchases are aware of the requirement to comply with the accessibility standards. Please also be aware that Section 508 will impact the EIT you use in the acquisition process, such as web sites.

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